



# News Release

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## **Children often miss second dose of H1N1 vaccine — supply is plentiful**

**OLYMPIA** — Now that there's plenty of H1N1 (swine flu) vaccine state health officials encourage parents to be sure their children are fully protected against the virus. All kids under 10 need two doses and many in Washington haven't gotten the second shot.

"We're glad so many parents are protecting their kids by getting them vaccinated," says Secretary of Health Mary Selecky. "It's vital to make sure they take that final step to get the second dose that many kids need for the full effect. We also know there are many kids who haven't been vaccinated at all. And with the plentiful supply, right now is a great time to protect them too."

The American Academy of Pediatrics recently said that no state had more than half of its children fully immunized against H1N1. A recent survey reported that up to 80 percent of kids under 10 who'd gotten the first dose were overdue for the second dose. A check of Washington data shows similar results. In our state, among children under five, 181,000 got the first dose, but only about 36,000 got the second dose needed for full protection.

Vaccination is the best protection against H1N1. Children under 10 need two doses of vaccine; for this age group, one dose is less effective against the virus. Children over 10 need only one dose. There are still many children who've not been vaccinated against H1N1 at all.

Even though flu activity has slowed in our state, it's still important for parents to get their kids vaccinated against H1N1 flu. Parents of kids under 10 should check with their health care provider about the second dose of H1N1 vaccine, and have their older children vaccinated, too. Parents should also ask about seasonal flu vaccine. Many [local health agencies](http://www.doh.wa.gov/h1n1/h1n1_getvaccine.htm) ([http://www.doh.wa.gov/h1n1/h1n1\\_getvaccine.htm](http://www.doh.wa.gov/h1n1/h1n1_getvaccine.htm)), retail pharmacies, and grocery stores also have vaccine.

People 65 and older are less likely to get H1N1 flu, but those who do are more likely to have complications or get secondary infections, like pneumonia. Since H1N1 vaccine is readily available, seniors are encouraged to get it. People 65 and older who've never had the pneumococcal vaccine should get that one, too. Pneumococcal vaccine is also recommended for young children, along with older children and adults under 65, with certain medical conditions.

The H1N1 flu strain that's circulating in Washington and across the country is a new strain and no one can predict what's going to happen. It could come back strong and there's enough vaccine now for everyone in the state who wants it.

The state Department of Health has information about vaccine and where to find it online. The agency's [H1N1 Web site](http://www.doh.wa.gov/h1n1/default.htm) (www.doh.wa.gov/h1n1/default.htm) offers tips on how schools, businesses, and people at home can stay healthy as this year's flu season continues. The agency also posts [H1N1 updates on Twitter](http://twitter.com/wa_deptofhealth) (http://twitter.com/wa\_deptofhealth).

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Visit the Washington Department of Health Web site at <a href="http://www.doh.wa.gov">http://www.doh.wa.gov</a> for <i>a healthy dose of information</i> .
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